

PETITION

OF

JOHNSON PRICE AND ALEXANDER R. M^CKEE,

PRAYING

A grant of land in Oregon, on condition that they cause it to be settled.

MAY 18, 1848.

Referred to the Committee on Public Lands, and ordered to be printed.

The undersigned, citizens of the town of Lancaster, county of Garrard, and State of Kentucky, impressed with the importance of an early occupation and permanent settlement of the territory of Oregon, and believing it to be the duty as well as the advantage of the United States of America to afford every facility to effectuate that object by liberal offers to enterprising and experienced men, beg leave to present the following suggestions and petition:

They are convinced that the interest of the United States in a commercial point, the dissemination of enlightened republican principles, the prevention of depredations upon settlers, and aggressions upon our territory, demand the immediate exercise of the power of government; and in their opinion a more judicious and effectual mode of operation could not be devised than by settlement of as much of that territory as possible with the *bold, intrepid*, and indefatigable sons of the western wilds, in connexion with the chivalrous sons of the south, and the reflective and resolute spirits of the north and east.

They therefore petition the Senate and House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America, to grant them ——— acres of the unappropriated and unsettled lands of said United States in the territory of Oregon, upon the condition that they, by themselves or agents, cause *one hundred families* to settle upon said grant of land within the space of ——— years from the date of said grant; and also a grant of ——— acres of land lying in the said territory, for every additional twenty-five families settled by them in the territory aforesaid, within the time specified as aforesaid.

The petitioners and settlers upon said land to cause the same to be surveyed and laid off into townships, sections, &c., as other public lands are surveyed and laid off. And the said grant or grants to be located on any lands in Oregon unclaimed by individuals, by reason of previous settlement or pre-emption right; the petitioners and settlers under them paying all expenses of surveys, &c.

Also authorizing your petitioners, by themselves or either of them, to make deeds to the settlers upon said lands for the quantity of not less than

— acres to each family, and not less than — acres to each young man over sixteen years of age, which deeds shall pass the title, and be recorded as other deeds in said territory are recorded.

A family to be computed as follows:

A man and his wife, with or without children.

A widower with two or more children—if males, under sixteen years of age; if females, unmarried.

A widow with two or more children—if males, under sixteen years of age; if females, unmarried.

Two single men over the age of sixteen years.

They deem it supererogation to present in detail and support by argument the beneficial results of such an enterprise, being satisfied that the Congress of the United States are already impressed with the importance of the subject.

They, however, submit the following, which, in their opinion, will be in part the results:

A new field for commerce.

The government will be enriched by the fruits of extended fisheries; (a great many of our citizens would apply their industry and enterprise to this object.)

A speedy occupation and sale of public lands in Oregon.

A new, extended, and profitable field for all kinds of mechanics, improvement in husbandry, &c., &c.

The increase of home manufactories.

Export of grain and other agricultural products to China and other countries.

Facilities for the defence of our Mediterranean seacoast.

Homes to many poor and destitute families: open a wide field for mental improvement; thus promoting the sciences and arts.

Extend the gospel of the Son of God—an essential step to insure the glory of this great republic.

Your petitioners are aware of the importance and responsibility of the undertaking. The glory and honor of their country, and the amelioration of the condition of their fellow-men, are considerations among others which embolden them to the enterprise. Relying upon their *industry, perseverance,* and *firmness*, they cannot but believe in their ultimate success.

JOHNSON PRICE.

ALEXANDER R. McKEE.